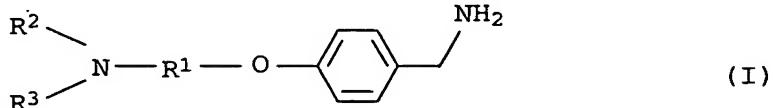


We claim:

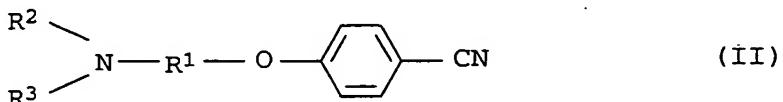
1. A process for preparing 4-[aminoalkoxy]benzylamines of the
5 general formula (I)



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by catalytically hydrogenating 4-[aminoalkoxy]benzonitriles of the general formula (II)

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where, in the compounds of the general formulae I and II,
R¹ is C₁-C₈-alkylene, R² and R³ are each independently
C₁-C₈-alkyl or are joined to give a ring which may
additionally contain a heteroatom, which comprises carrying
out the hydrogenation at elevated pressure and elevated
temperatures.

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2. A process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the hydrogenation is carried out at pressures of from 5 to 350 bar and temperatures of from 50 to 250°C.

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3. A process as claimed in claim 1 or 2, wherein the hydrogenation is carried out at pressures of from 5 to 200 bar.

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4. A process as claimed in any of claims 1 to 3, wherein the hydrogenation is carried out at temperatures of from 60 to 110°C.

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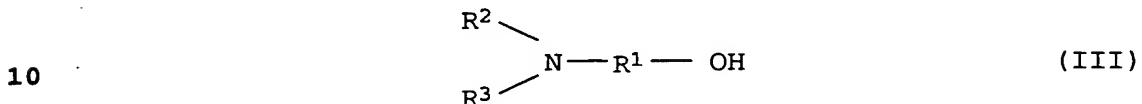
5. A process as claimed in any of claims 1 to 4, wherein the hydrogenation is carried out in the presence of an organic solvent.
6. A process as claimed in any of claims 1 to 5, wherein the hydrogenation is carried out in the presence of Raney nickel or Raney cobalt.

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7. A process as claimed in any of claims 1 to 6, wherein the hydrogenation is carried out in the presence of ammonia.

8. A process as claimed in any of claims 1 to 7, wherein the intermediate (II) is obtained by reacting a
5 4-halobenzonitrile with an alkali metal salt of an aminoalcohol of the general formula (III)

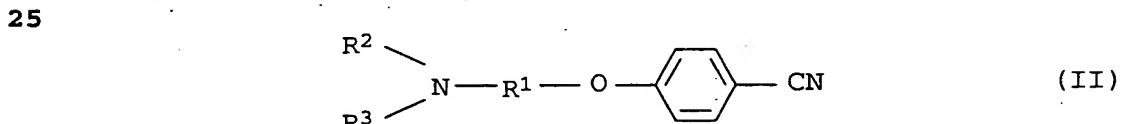


where R^1 , R^2 and R^3 are each as defined above.

15 9. A process as claimed in claim 6, wherein the alkali metal salt of the aminoalcohol (III) is obtained by reaction with a base AM where M is an alkali metal or an alkaline earth metal and A is hydride, $\text{C}_1\text{-}\text{C}_4$ -alkyl, hydroxyl or $\text{C}_1\text{-}\text{C}_4$ -alkoxy.

20 10. A process as claimed in any of claims 1 to 9, wherein R^1 is ethylene and R^2 and R^3 are each methyl.

11. A process for preparing 4[aminoalkoxy]benzonitriles of the general formula (II)



30 where R^1 is $\text{C}_1\text{-}\text{C}_8$ -alkylene, and R^2 and R^3 are each independently $\text{C}_1\text{-}\text{C}_8$ -alkyl or are joined to give a ring which may additionally contain a heteroatom,

35 which comprises initially converting an aminoalcohol of the general formula (III) to the alkali metal salt using a base AM where M is an alkali metal or an alkaline earth metal and A is hydride, $\text{C}_1\text{-}\text{C}_4$ -alkyl, hydroxyl or $\text{C}_1\text{-}\text{C}_4$ -alkoxy, and reacting the alkali metal salt with 4-halobenzonitrile.

40 12. A process as claimed in claim 11, wherein the base AM used is sodium methoxide or sodium ethoxide.

13. A process as claimed in claim 11 or 12, wherein methanol or ethanol is distilled out of the reaction mixture.

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14. A process as claimed in any of claims 11 to 13, wherein the reaction of the alkali metal salt is carried out in the presence of a solvent.

5 15. A process as claimed in any of claims 11 to 14, wherein the reaction of the alkali metal salt is carried out at temperatures of from 100 to 140°C.

10 16. A process as claimed in any of claims 11 to 15, wherein the amount of the alkali metal salt is from 1.00 to 1.5 equivalents, based on 4-halobenzonitrile.

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